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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ACCRA 000118

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SUBJECT: GHANA'S PRESIDENCY OF THE UNSC

Classified By: AMBASSADOR PAMELA E. BRIDGEWATER FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: As Ghana assumed the Presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for the month of October, we expect its focus to be Africa centered, particularly as it relates to peace and security. According to Ghanaian officials, their agenda will likely include Sudan, Somalia, the Ethiopian/Eritrean border dispute, Cote d'Ivoire, and women's issues. Ghana tends to view these issues through its historic preference for multilateral solutions, its desire to resolve and prevent conflicts in Africa that threaten the continent's development, and its current role as African Union Chair. Regarding Iran, we expect Ghana to continue to support U.S. efforts to resolve the conflict, although the GOG will consistently stress its desire for diplomacy and targeted sanctions. END SUMMARY

¶2. (C) On October 1, Ghana assumed the Presidency of the UN Security Council. Ghana is a committed member of the United Nations, and views the organization as a critical mechanism to promote its interests, particularly vis-a-vis international peace and security. According to statements by MFA officials and Ghana's Ambassador to the UN, Leslie Christian, Ghana will focus on African issues, particularly on peace and security, during its one-month tenure. Darfur, Somalia, Cote d'Ivoire, the role of women in Africa, and the Eritrea/Ethiopia border dispute will likely lead Ghana's agenda. As noted by President Kufuor in his speech at UNGA, Ghana will place a high priority on resolving conflicts, and in ensuring that sufficient attention is paid to &the consolidation of peace.⁸

SUDAN

¶3. (C) We expect Sudan to remain high on the agenda during Ghana's turn as UNSC President. Ghana supported the Hybrid Force in Sudan and was pleased it was approved. Despite the approval, however, C. Nii Amon Kotey, Head of the Africa and African Union (AU) Affairs Bureau at the MFA, told us last week that Darfur remains an &embarrassment⁸ for both Africa and the international community. Ghana, he said, believes there must be more aid to Darfur and increased international engagement to resolve the problem. Paul Essel, Supervising Director of the Office for Multilateral, Legal, and Passport Affairs at the MFA, also told us recently that the Hybrid Force must be deployed quickly.

SOMALIA

¶4. (C) Ghana officials indicate that Somalia remains a priority issue and will figure prominently during the Ghana

presidency, but the GOG has been slow in deploying the 350 troops it committed to AMISOM in February. The GOG has asked for more than USD 20 million in assistance to equip its detachment before deployment. Given Ghana's strong history with peacekeeping, we believe it remains committed to AMISOM. However the recent attack on Senegalese peacekeepers in Darfur, particularly the reports that those peacekeepers may have lacked adequate ammunition, may lead the GOG to take a more cautious approach regarding the need for strong material assistance prior to deployment. In addition, as noted by President Kufuor in his recent speech at UNGA, Ghana will likely press for a clear plan to replace AMISOM with a UN force after its mandate expires in early 2008.

COTE D,IVOIRE

¶15. (C) Ghana is keeping a careful watch on neighboring Cote d,Ivoire, and will want the Security Council to devote more time to the Ouagadougou peace agreement, monitoring progress toward implementing the agreement's provisions. Following President Gbagbo's recent call for lifting the UNSC arms embargo on Cote d,Ivoire, we should expect Ghana to encourage examination of these issues. Ghana's Representative to the UN has noted that the Council will examine the existing sanctions closely once it receives the report on Cote d,Ivoire. MFA International Organizations head Paul Essel, indicated to us that Ghana is generally pleased with the progress in Cote d,Ivoire with the unity government and disarmament.

WOMEN AND SECURITY

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¶16. (C) Consistent with its leadership on peacekeeping and on regional issues, Ghana is preparing a paper titled "Women and Peace and Security" which it plans to present to the UN in late October. Mavis Kusorgbor, an official in the MFA's Office of Multilateral Affairs, indicated that women's issues will also be a priority for Ghana, and Ghana looks forward to meaningful debate on the role of women and security in Africa. Specifically, Ghana may work to create a monitoring mechanism for gender-based violence.

ETHIOPIA/ERITREA BORDER DISPUTE

¶17. (C) The ongoing border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea will also likely be on Ghana's agenda. President Kufuor is visiting Ethiopia presently (septel).

IRAN

¶18. (C) With regard to Iran, Ghana has been supportive of the U.S. position regarding sanctions and we expect this to continue. While Ghana is a proud member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and Ghana's foreign minister recently traveled to Tehran, Ghana has indicated its strong support for the non-proliferation regime and views Iran's activities with suspicion. Ghana will continue to advocate a diplomatic approach to this issue, and support sanctions that are clearly focused on those responsible for Iran's nuclear activities.

UN REFORM

¶19. (U) Ghana favors UN reform in the broad sense and its Ambassador to the UN is on the record stating that Ghana favors expanding the UNSC both in terms of Permanent Membership with veto power and non-permanent membership, adding that Africa should be given two permanent seats and two non-permanent seats on the UNSC.

COMMENT

¶10. (C) Ghana has played an active role thus far on the UNSC. Ghana frames many of these issues in its broader role as African Union Chair rather than on a bilateral basis, reflecting its long-standing commitment to multilateralism. While pursuing its interests in regional peace and stability, Ghana will also continue to work closely with the other two African members of the UNSC, believing that) to the extent practicable - Africa should present a united front on the UNSC.

BRIDGEWATER